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*Dance of the Fairies*

Guy Francis de Moncy Burgess and Donald Duart MacLean, the British diplomatists, homosexuals and sybarites who defected in 1951, are said to be the social arbiters of Moscow's Anglo-Saxon traitor set. Although William Martin and Bernon Mitchell, late of the U. S. National Security Agency, would have been much too non-U for the Burgess-MacLean circle in pre-treachery days, a place will surely be made for them in the relaxed atmosphere of the Workers' Fatherland. All the cozier, no doubt, because they are both, as every newspaper dispatch informs us in meticulous euphemism, "bachelors." Possibly Maurice Halperin—ex-Boston University and OSS expert on Latin America who has transferred residence and talents to Moscow after some years in Mexico's Communist colony, but who was nonetheless granted a U. S. passport extension in July—also drops in regularly. If Burgess and MacLean whoop it up in Moscow even half as raucously as once they did in Cairo, Washington and London, a good time will be had by all. The Carnival of the Rats.

From the timing, the text of the MVD-prepared scripts, and the smell, it seems likely that the pair of U. S. fairies took wing in some sort of linkage to the flight and trial of Francis Gary Powers. For the MVD, at any rate, the Powers and Martin-Mitchell acts on the Moscow stage were part of the same propaganda show, expressive of the same political message. And there is no reason to believe that the closing curtain is down.

One hesitates, having recently been liberated from the Reign of Terror, to bring up matters of loyalty and that sort of thing: but the time has come for Congress to review the hiring practices and clearance rules of our top-secret agencies. Could no one have guessed before this summer that Bernon Mitchell and William Martin were a bit queer, with all the potential for instability, indiscretion and blackmail that inevitably goes with homosexuality? Was it known that Mitchell had been under psychiatric treatment? That their active disloyalty had begun, apparently, at least as far back as a Mexican trip in 1959?

And couldn't anyone in CIA recognize that Francis Powers, whether from disloyalty, avarice, cowardice or plain stupidity, was not the kind of person to risk letting the enemy get hold of?

Or are these cases merely the unfortunate but inescapable exceptions that are to be expected in even the best managed spy outfits? Well, there have been nine publicly known defections this year—not so few when you consider the nature of the enemy. And in one major European capital today, not a code clerk or pilot but the head of the CIA mission is a man who less than two years ago had to spend six months in a mental hospital, surrounded by security guards as well as nurses. The diagnosis was logorrhea—uncontrollable tongue-wagging. If he ever shows up on a Moscow platform, there's really going to be enough talk to make the welkin ring.